A PREHISTORIC ROAD

THE OLDEST MEMORIAL OF HUMAN ACTION IN ENGLAND.

Older by Far Than the Romans Is the Ancient Winchester-Canterbury Highway, Which Counts Its Age by Thousands of Years.

There runs from Winchester to Canterbury a prehistoric track which is probably the oldest memorial of men's action in England. It is certainly older than the Romans—that is, it is certainly 2,000 years old, and how much older it may be than that we have no way of telling, but we do know that Winchester and Canterbury must have been the two great centers of the national life in the old barbarian times before the Romans came, and we may therefore suppose without too much temerity that this road is almost coeval with the existence of organized human life in Great Britain.

Two years ago I explored this road thoroughly. The whole distance is about 120 miles, and of that one may say that antiquarians had discovered, before my friends and I understood its thorough exploration, about three-quarters. Of the remaining quarter some part was doubtful and the rest unknown, but this unknown part did not make one continuous stretch. It was pieced in, as it were, along the length of the way, a bit here and a bit there. Thus one would have ten or fifteen miles along which the old British road corresponded with the modern highway; then would come perhaps two miles of doubtful lane, the history of which had to be read and the direction noted before one could be certain that it was really part of the old road; then after that would come, say, half a mile of pure waste heath or marsh or forest, in which nothing but a most careful examination, the records of old maps, the evidence of place names, and so forth, helped one to identify the track of the British way; then the highway would appear again, coinciding with the old trail, and so forth, long known or obvious bits coming in between short doubtful or unknown bits, until after infinite pains we built up the whole of the original track with the doubtful exception of a few hundred yards.

It may interest my readers to know what causes chiefly preserved this road and what have tended to its obliteration.

The causes which preserved it were three. In the first place, it ran for the main part along the chalk hills which are known as the North downs, just above the level of cultivation, and chalk is an excellent preservative for a road of this kind. It takes the impression of passing traffic, the weight of which makes a sort of platform along the hillside. It is not easy to cultivate, and people do not build upon its heights. Moreover, chalk does not wash away, so that such a road, once formed, would remain for centuries.

The second cause which preserved the road was the system of turnpike which was introduced, I think, about 200 years ago and lasted until our own time. Men naturally tried to avoid the turnpike if they were on horseback or if they were drovers, and they would turn off the good turnpike roads of the valley, where they had to pay at every gate, and go along the old free road above the hills.

And, thirdly, the pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Thomas at Canterbury, which sprang up about 700 years ago, powerfully helped the survival of the road. Winchester was beginning to fall into decay when this pilgrimage arose, and Canterbury was no longer a very important town, but when thousands of men had occasion to go from the west of England to Canterbury on a pilgrimage Winchester became the natural meeting place, and the road from Winchester to Canterbury once again grew in importance. Churches and villages sprang up along it, traditions and legends began to cling to it, and one way and another the memory of it was saved for history and for ourselves.

I have said that there were many places where the road was almost or entirely lost. The main cause of this was cultivation. As the population grew denser it became necessary to plow up the poorer land high up on the hillside, and as these old roads were not metaled in any way the moment their surface was plowed up no trace of the road could possibly remain. Another cause was the formation of the great parks which rich men began to inclose and to wall around about 150 years ago and later. If a rich man took a fancy to a bit of ground which used to be common and through which the old road went he would put a wall round it and turn it into a park and divert the right of way by a special act of parliament round his new property. There are examples of this all along the old road—as, for instance, at Lord Stanhope's park at Chevening, at the Leveson-Gowers' place at Titsey, at Lord Gerard's park at Eastwell and many other places.

The old road would also be lost over marshy ground, and now and then, but very rarely, modern buildings would appear on it, and then, of course, it was impossible to track it out unless one could get a record of what the ground was like before the buildings were erected.—London Black and White.

Golden Silence.

Mother—You're very fond of your dolly, aren't you, dear?

Little Mary—Yes. She's nicer than anybody else I know.

Mother—Oh, no! She's not nicer than your mamma surely?

Little Mary—Yes, she is, 'cause she don't never 'sturb me when I'm talkin'.—Catholic Standard and Times.

AN INGENIOUS SUGGESTION

The Questions by Which a Young Lawyer Won His Case.

At the Metropolitan club in Washington a group of lawyers were discussing the value of expert medical testimony when a well known criminal lawyer was reminded of a curious case in Richmond some years ago.

"At that time," said the lawyer, "about the most prominent physician in the community was an exceptionally learned and able medico whose name for obvious reasons I cannot give. For the purposes of this story it will suffice to refer to him as Dr. Morgan.

"Now, Dr. Morgan one morning received a visit from a young friend, very recently entered upon his practice before the bar of Richmond, who had just been retained in his first important case. Naturally he was very anxious to win in his maiden effort, and it was with reference to certain phases of the case that he sought the advice of his old friend the doctor.

"The young lawyer explained to the doctor that he was greatly perplexed. It was a poisoning case, and the youthful attorney had been retained to defend the prisoner, a young woman of whose innocence he had no doubt. It was, however, the lawyer explained, not an easy thing to prove the girl guiltless of the crime.

"'An intelligent motive can easily be assigned for the crime by the prosecution,' said the lawyer, 'for the reason that her husband, the murdered man, was elderly, rich and ill tempered to a degree that made her life a burden. Moreover, the wife is the only heir. Now, I have reliable information to the effect that counsel on the other side will offer medical testimony to show arsenical poisoning.'

"'You say that you are positively convinced of the young woman's innocence?'

"'Positively,' was the young lawyer's reply. 'The girl is innocent, but the evidence is overwhelmingly in favor of the state. It will be easy to prove that the pair lived unhappily, that it was an uncongenial marriage and that the traces of arsenic were found in the old man's body after a suspiciously sudden death.'

"The case looked like a bad one. Dr. Morgan was very quiet and thoughtful for some moments. Then he said: 'The medical experts will probably produce in court the glass tubes containing the drug. You must ask them whether they tested the tubes for arsenic before they experimented with the fluids.'

"'I see the point,' eagerly interrupted the youthful lawyer. 'And if they should admit that they neglected to make that test?'

"'Then you will put your question in this form: "Is not arsenic used in the manufacture of some kinds of glass?"'

"The lawyer acted on the doctor's suggestion. The principal medical expert seemed taken by surprise and finally admitted, after some beating about the bush, that he had not tested the tubes for arsenic. He was also induced to concede that arsenic was sometimes used in certain kinds of glass.

"The young counsel, having obtained these two answers, was clever enough to cease his cross examination at that point.

"When he came to the summing up of the case he dwelt at length upon the possibility that the arsenic had been 'sweated' out of the glass and said the neglect of the experts to test the tubes should certainly be considered as vitiating to a large degree, if not wholly, the medical testimony.

"Well, the young woman was acquitted. As the other evidence was purely circumstantial, the acquitting verdict was given mainly because the dangerous force of the medical testimony had been weakened by the old doctor's ingenious suggestion."—New York Herald.

Mint and Money.

We all know that a place where metal is coined is called a mint, but why? Is it not a strikingly curious fact that the two words mint and money are made from the same Latin word? Yet it is not more so than many other facts disclosed in the study of etymology. There is very commonly a close connection between the history of events and the making of the words most prominent in the record of that history. Mint is the name of a place for making coins simply because when the need of such a name was first recognized the place used for their making happened to be the Roman temple of the goddess Juno, one of whose surnames was Moneta, said to mean literally "adviser." In Anglo-Saxon the word had two syllables—mynet—which show its origin more clearly than the monosyllable mint does. Money is called moneta in Italian and monnaie in French, and the French name for a mint is "hotel des monnaies."

A Great Earthquake.

Probably few people are aware that the greatest earthquake our country has experienced since its settlement was the now almost forgotten earthquake of New Madrid, the first tremors of which took place on Dec. 16, 1811. Strange is that trait of human nature by which even the most appalling of nature's manifestations slip rapidly from the memory, so that only a hundred years later little but tradition remains of the earthquake which changed the configuration of extensive areas of the Mississippi valley, raising some portions, depressing others, shifting the course of streams and draining old swamps at one point and forming new lakes at others. All this and more, however, took place during the successive vibrations which shook the New Madrid region almost continuously for a period of many months in 1811 and 1812.—M. L. Fuller in Popular Science Monthly.

DOGS OF ALASKA.

The Native Mongrels the Indispensable Burden Bearers.

The native dog is known as the "huskie" or "malamoot" and is a mongrel—one-half timber wolf. He has characteristics which especially fit him for his work. He is heavy set, with a thick coating of long hair, impervious to cold and with just enough wolf in his nature to make him restless, eager to go, and with a sufficient mixture of dog to temper a fierceness and a treachery which might and sometimes do become dangerous. All this is understood—in fact, carefully studied and watched by the Alaskan—and those qualities which manifest themselves in fidelity and gentleness are encouraged by kind treatment, while the wolfish side of their nature is quickly and effectually subdued by numerous whippings. These animals have not yet learned to express themselves by barking, and the only noise they can make is a dismal howl. It is a rare occurrence for them to bite a human being, but they will fight among themselves on the slightest provocation, and it is not an uncommon sight for half a dozen "huskies" to hold a pitched battle on the main street of Fairbanks. A bucket of cold water will generally put them to flight, but in the majority of cases the miners pay no attention to the melee and allow the dogs to fight it out.

The wolf nature manifests itself in their thieving propensities, and all food must be "cached" out of their reach. A hungry "huskie" will open a box of canned beef with ease by biting through the tin. He will lie before the door of a tent or cabin, pretending to be asleep, when in reality he is waiting for a chance to ransack the kitchen. One day I saw a miner's dinner wrecked by his own dog, a splendid, big, wolfish fellow, who overturned a pot of beans and in the most unconcerned manner walked off with the hot bacon in his mouth. No matter what depredations they may commit, severe punishment, so as to cripple or kill them, is out of the question, on account of their great value in the transportation of supplies. It is an inferior dog that is not worth $40, and many of them, say their masters, "are not for sale."

Two good dogs can haul a man forty or fifty miles a day on a good trail or carry from 500 to 600 pounds of freight about twenty miles in six hours. They are faithful to the last degree and will work even when weak from lack of food. When in this condition, however, they sometimes become dangerous, and should the driver fall he may be attacked, but these instances are rare, and more often the dog is sacrificed to save his master from starvation.—Mrs. C. R. Miller in Leslie's Weekly.

The Farmer Grows Wiser.

"You can't fool the farmer any more on merchandise for his farm," said the proprietor of an agricultural store as he wrote down a large order for a certain fertilizer. "Time was when you could sell a farmer anything in the way of fertilizer and no questions asked. It was a fat time for the manufacturers of fertilizers, but that time is all past. Now the man who tills the soil must know all about what the market offers for enriching crops. He insists that he be given the formula of every fertilizer on the market, and he knows whether too much phosphorus, potash, etc., predominates. He knows what his soil needs most; he understands that certain crops demand a certain sort of enrichment of the earth and that other crops necessitate an entirely different sort of an enrichment. In the old days he'd dump anything on his land and trust to luck that things would grow all right; same way with tools. He won't buy a farming implement until he has some actual knowledge of its worth. It's all because of the agricultural colleges which spread agricultural information gratis into the country towns, so that a farmer can hardly help learning a thing or two."—New York Press.

The Teacher's Output.

Teaching is essentially a giving of oneself for others, a daily dying that others may live, and yet renewing one's life again that there may be more to bestow the next day. No matter how obscure and modest the place may be where one is at work, if its opportunities are only utilized in the right spirit it may be a center from which the mankind of the future draws strength and health. The joy of the teacher is that his ideas, his plans, his dreams, live on in his pupils. Others may jealously guard their possessions. The teacher takes pride in the abundance of his gifts. He does not talk about patents and copyrights. It pleases him to see his pupils give body to his thoughts and derive pleasure and profit from them. Teachers, as a rule, are of the right spirit. It would be a sad day for our country if they were not. They give freely and grow richer the more they give.—School Journal.

A Robin at the Funeral.

A few weeks ago a little dog had to be taken by force from the grave of his mistress in Roydon churchyard, England. The affair has reminded the bishop of Barking of an incident in the same village when he was officiating at the funeral of the late vicar. He says: "After the coffin had been placed in the chancel and just as the service was beginning a little robin hopped up the center aisle, glancing to right and left at the villagers and mourners, and finally alighted on the coffin, where as the service proceeded he sung a few notes at intervals. I was told after the service that the same little bird was a pet of the vicar's and was present in the church on several occasions and among them when he preached his last sermon before his death."

BOILED POTATOES.

Why They Should Always Be Cooked In Boiling Water.

Pare potatoes with a sharp vegetable knife just as thin as possible, for that part of the tuber lying close to the skin is richest in mineral salts, and put each potato as peeled into a pan of cold water to prevent discoloration. Have ready meanwhile a kettle of boiling water and when the peeling process is complete take the potatoes from the cold water and, covering them with boiling salted water, set them on the range, covered, to boil. Twenty minutes usually suffice, but to test them use a skewer or fork, and when they can be pierced easily remove at once from the fire, pour off all the water and set them on the back of the range, uncovered, to steam dry, assisting that process occasionally by a slight shaking of the kettle.

If one asks the reason why potatoes should always be cooked in boiling water try the following experiment for proof: Take two cups, in each of which has been put a teaspoonful of ordinary starch. Pour over one a quarter of a cupful of boiling water and over the other the same quantity of cold water and observe the result. The one over which the boiling water was poured stays in shape, a compact mass, while the one with the cold water dissolves into a soft paste. The potato is largely composed of starch, and from this trial any one may draw his own conclusions. If you wish a pulpy, watery potato use cold water, but if a dry, mealy, snowy ball that would delight the heart of Epicurus himself always use boiling water.

WEARING APPAREL.

The Tunic, the Toga and the Leather Dress of the Ancients.

Ancient wearing apparel was not cut to fit, as is our modern clothing. Having no definite shape of its own, it did not disguise the wearer's figure, and the grace and beauty of Greek drapery are dependent almost entirely on the perfect proportions of the figure beneath. The tunic worn by both Greeks and Romans was little, if at all, fitted to the wearer and when ungirded hung in folds all round, while the toga was little more than a sheet and was worn in all sorts of ways, according to the prevailing fashion. The Jews of old seem to have worn breeches, but the rest of their clothing seems to have been simply wrapped round them, for it was difficult for them to run or even walk fast without first "girding up their loins." The clothing of the northern races was probably always more of a fit than that of the southern, for they used leather, which does not lend itself to simple draping, but our ancestors probably wore an almost shapeless tunic belted at the waist.

Another striking difference is found in the gradual monopoly by women of the ornamental element in dress. Once masculine dress was by far the most splendid, and woman, holding an absolutely subordinate social position, had to content herself with humbler attire. As she has won her way to freedom and equality she has annexed not only the beautiful, but the extravagant elements of costume and left man to content himself with a condition of colorless utility.

Fish Swallow Sand.

Captains of fishing smacks in the North sea have found that codfish at certain times of the year take sand into their stomachs as "ballast." This, it would appear, is done when the fish are about to migrate from the shallow water covering the southern banks of the North sea to the deeper water farther north. It has been observed that fish caught on the southern banks just before the migration begins and those caught in the northern waters after it is completed have sand in their stomachs and that the sand is discharged after the arrival of the fish at the southern banks on the return migration. In proof of this it is stated that the sand found in the fish often differs in color and quality from that of the bottom where they are caught.—Washington Post.

Chile and Andes.

Two ways. Chili and Chile, is the name of our South American neighbor written. Chile is the Spanish and Chilean form. The name is commonly explained as an old Peruvian word for snow, the allusion being to the Andes. But "Chili" has also been identified as a native South American word, "chili," meaning cold, which would make it really the "chilly" country. As to the meaning of "Andes," there is plenty of choice. The word has been variously interpreted as signifying the haunt of the tapir, the region of copper, the home of the Anti tribe and the site of the "Andenes," Spanish gardens on the mountain terraces.

Necessarily.

Dinglebats—The oculist charged you $5 for taking a grain of sand out of your eye? That's pretty steep, isn't it? Himpsley—I thought so till I looked over his bill. It was for "removing foreign substances from the cornea," and, of course, that costs more.—Chicago Tribune.

Would Please Dick.

Mrs. Henpeck—If you marry Dick, you need never expect me to come to see you, Daughter—Just say that into the gramophone, won't you, please? Mrs. Henpeck—What for? Daughter—I want to give it to Dick as a wedding present."

Useless Test.

"Are you feeling very ill?" asked the doctor. "Let me see your tongue, please."

"What's the use, doctor?" replied the patient. "No tongue can tell how bad I feel."

LIVING SECOND HAND.

It Is Quite a Common Thing In New York City.

Half the people of New York live second hand—that is, they dress second hand, furnish their houses second hand and wear secondhand jewelry.

There are stunning looking young women who wear nothing but Paris gowns all the year round. They cannot afford to go to Paris for such clothing, and they won't have anything that isn't "good style." They dress almost entirely out of the secondhand stores on Sixth and Seventh avenues, where anything from a hat to a pair of silk stockings is offered for sale at a third its original value. They would rather appear a trifle shabby and very effective than brand new and "shoppy."

One woman noted for her "good style" and richness of apparel buys all her frocks at a secondhand establishment and then has them dyed black to make them look new. A little bride who hates that new look which the average bridal suit possesses fitted out her entire apartment through advertisements of sales of secondhand furniture by private parties. Everything from her sideboard to her rugs looks like a family heirloom. There are many articles published in the papers and magazines on "How to Live Well on Nothing a Year," but the New Yorker could write a whole volume on "How to Live Swell on Nothing a Year" if he chose to.—New York Press.

A Queer Fact About Vision.

In the eye itself certain things may go on which give us wrong sensations, which, although not truly illusions, are very much like them. Thus, when we suddenly strike our heads or faces against something in the dark we see "stars," or bright sparks, which we know are not real lights, though they are quite as bright and sparkling as if they were. When we close one eye and look straight ahead at some word or letter in the middle of this page, for example, we seem to see not only the thing we are looking at, but everything else immediately about it and for a long way on each side. But the truth is there is a large round spot somewhere near the point at which we are looking in which we see nothing. Curiously enough, the existence of this blind spot was not discovered by accident, and nobody every suspected it until Mariotte reasoned from the construction of the eyeball that it must exist and proceeded to find it.

Man Against Horse.

A man (Shrubb) has run ten miles in 50 minutes 40 seconds; another man (Hutchens) has run 300 yards in 30 seconds; another man (George) has run a mile in 4 minutes 12¾ seconds. Of all running records this last appears most unapproachable, and it seems likely to stand for a very long time. Men like Shrubb, Bacon and "Deerfoot," who have covered very close on twelve miles in the hour, could certainly hold their own with most carriage horses over a good road. If the gait chosen were walking instead of running, the quadruped would be badly worsted.—Grand Magazine.

Not Quite a Tempest.

A young gentleman with an unmusical voice insisted upon singing at a social gathering.

"What does he call that?" inquired a disgusted guest.

"'The Tempest,' I think," answered another.

"Don't be alarmed," said an old sea captain present. "That's no tempest. It is only a squall and will soon be over."

Sarcasm.

Greene—Whom are your children said to take after, Mr. Enpeck? Enpeck (with a mental reservation)—The younger, with a sweet smile and angelic temper, takes after his mother. The elder, that cross eyed young viper, takes after me, I'm informed.—London Fun.

A Brick.

Knicker—Which side of the house does the baby resemble? Bocker—The outside. Don't you see how red he is?—Harper's Bazar.

Bees Like Light Clothes.

"There's one thing you want to remember if you go into the bee culture business," remarked the man who had just torn a hive to pieces to demonstrate how easy it was to handle bees, "and that is never to approach the bees when dressed in dark clothes. Bees have a decided aversion to dark habiliments, and they show their repugnance in a lively fashion. Wear white duck and you'll meet their approval. I never think of fussing with my hives so long as I'm wearing a dark suit, and my wife, to whom the bees are not accustomed, never has the least trouble in approaching the hives if she is wearing a white gown. A bee bears a grudge about as long as an Indian will. He makes no allowances for mistakes or an accident. Once you harm him he will have it in for you for the rest of his life. Bees are not naturally bad tempered, and they are really timid by nature, but if you carelessly crush them they will show an anger out of all proportion to their size and will sometimes sting you until they themselves drop dead."

Politicians' and Other Bibles.

"You bibliophiles talk about the 'breeches' Bible, the 'bug' Bible, the 'politician' Bible, the 'vinegar' Bible, and so on. What do those names mean?"

"I'll tell you," the collector answered. "Take first the 'breeches' Bible. It is so called because a typographical error in it causes the garments made by Adam and Eve out of fig leaves to be termed breeches instead of aprons.

"In the 'vinegar' Bible of 1807 the word 'vineyard' is misprinted 'vinegar.'

"The 'printers'' Bible, 1702, makes the psalmist say, 'Printers have persecuted me without a cause.'

"The 'religious' Bible, which was printed in 1637, put 'religious' for 'rebellious' in the fourth chapter, seventeenth verse of Jeremiah—'Because she hath been religious * * * saith the Lord.'

"The 'politician' Bible was published at Geneva in 1652. It makes the famous verse, 'Blessed are the peacemakers,' read 'Blessed are the placemakers.'"

Bananas as They Grow.

When you are buying bananas never purchase the long thin ones unless you want fruit which will pucker your mouth. No matter how well ripened these thin bananas are, they will always be found both sour and acrid. That is because the bunch containing them was picked too soon. The banana grows fastest at first in length. When it has reached its fullest development in that direction it suddenly begins to swell and in a few days will double its girth. It is at the end of this time that the banana is ripened naturally, and the effort of the banana importer is to have the fruit picked at the last moment and yet before the ripening has progressed even enough to tinge the bright green of the fruit with yellow. A difference of twenty-four hours on the trees at this time will make a difference in the weight of the fruit, perhaps 25 per cent, and all the difference in its final flavor between a puckery sour and the sweetness and smoothness which are characteristic of the ripe fruit.

Friendship.

There is a certain development of love in which the covetous longing of two people for one another has yielded to a higher mutual thirst for an ideal above them both. But who has found such love, who has experienced it? Its true name is friendship.

On the Safe Side.

Schroeder (to his neighbor, a widower)—Why did you send your housekeeper away, since she was such a good cook? The Widower—She made such splendid puddings I was afraid I should marry her.—Fliegende Blatter.

A cubic foot of distilled water weighs very nearly 1,000 ounces.

Pessimistic.

"I never knew such a pessimist as that fellow Jenkins."

"Yes, I actually believe his idea of heaven is a place that is paved with gold bricks."—Puck.